



## Media release

Thursday, 8 April 2010

### Stonefly Lodge earns environmental award

**Stonefly Lodge** has gained a Qualmark Enviro Gold Award, recognising its high standards in environmental practices.

To earn New Zealand tourism's official environmental award, Stonefly Lodge had to show effectiveness in energy efficiency, waste management and water conservation, with community activities and conservation initiatives also considered under Qualmark's environmental criteria.

Owners, John and Kate Kerr, say they are very proud to receive this recognition from Qualmark after 3 years of hard work building the Lodge with environmental conservation and energy conservation as the principal focus. Having just received the Qualmark 5 star rating for Guest and Hosted accommodation this new award is the icing on the cake.

It's very rewarding to live in a building with such a very low environmental footprint," says John Kerr

All businesses carrying the Qualmark logo must meet standards for environmental practices, says Qualmark chief executive, Geoff Penrose, with the awards recognising top performers in this area.

"Environmental practices are evaluated as part of our quality assessment process and Enviro Awards are granted to businesses showing a high degree of commitment to caring for the environment and their community," says Mr Penrose.

Over 470 businesses have achieved Enviro Award status - recognising their commitment to Qualmark's responsible tourism criteria and environmental practices.

Qualmark® is New Zealand's trusted guide to quality travel experiences - helping travellers identify over 2,300 great places to stay, things to do and ways to get around.

Accommodation, activities and transport businesses carrying the Qualmark® logo have been independently assessed to meet tough quality standards and environmental criteria - earning New Zealand tourism's official quality mark

Qualmark is jointly owned by Tourism New Zealand and the New Zealand Automobile Association. The programme is run as an industry service, on a not-for-profit basis.

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**About Qualmark Enviro Awards**

Since August 2008, the environmental performance of all tourism businesses with a Qualmark has been assessed under Responsible Tourism Operations criteria as part of on-site quality assessments. Businesses performing well in reducing environmental impact in five key action areas (energy efficiency, waste management, water conservation, community activities and conservation initiatives) are eligible to apply for an Enviro-Gold, Enviro-Silver or Enviro-Bronze Award.

The initiative, referred to as Qualmark Green, was unveiled to the tourism industry by the Minister of Tourism on 27 May 2008. The introduction of the Responsible Tourism criteria marked a world first with New Zealand being the first country to have a fully integrated quality and environmental performance tourism assurance system.